

# LORD CROMER'S SUPREMACY:

- I. "DUALISM" AND SINGLE CONTROL;
- II. "THE RULER OF THE STATE";
- III. "THE ADMINISTRATIVE HIERARCHY";
- IV. THE KHEDIVE AND HIS SUBJECTS.

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London:

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WESTMINSTER, S.W.,

AND

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WESTMINSTER, S.W.

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PRICE SIXPENCE.



## NOTES ON EGYPTIAN AFFAIRS.

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The following pamphlet is the first of a short series which it is proposed to issue at intervals in the course of the next few months, under the above general title, and in furtherance of reforms for which the need is briefly indicated in an earlier pamphlet entitled 'Egypt under British Control.' Among the matters which will probably be dealt with are :—Military Control, Finance, Administration of Justice, Education, Public Works, Municipal Institutions, and the Capitulations.

H. R. F. B.

Broadway Chambers, Westminster,  
25th February, 1907.



## LORD CROMER'S SUPREMACY.

THE main factor in each and all of the complicated problems awaiting solution in connection with Egyptian affairs is the personality of His Majesty's Minister Plenipotentiary and Consul-General at Cairo. Probably few other men, if any, could have done so much good work in the service of his sovereign and country, or in genuine effort to benefit the people committed to his care, as has been done by Lord Cromer. Respect and gratitude for this good work, however, must lose their value, even to him, if they blind our eyes to the defects and concomitants of his rule. It is necessary, therefore, that these should be called attention to as a preliminary to the review of some methods of British control in Egypt, now in urgent need of reform, which it is hoped will be offered in subsequent pages.

### I. "DUALISM" AND SINGLE CONTROL.

The "Dual Control" started in Egypt in 1876 and reshaped in 1879, whereby the management of the country's affairs was entrusted to the joint care of French and English Controllers-General, was rendered unworkable by the summary action of the British Government in suppressing Arabi Pasha's revolt in 1882, and it was formally abolished by a Khedivial Decree dated 18th January, 1883. But it merely gave place to a "Dualism," as Nubar Pasha politely called it. In this "Dualism" the Khedive has been allowed to have a subordinate partnership; and the independent action of Great Britain has been hampered to some extent by the still-recognised suzerainty of the Porte, and by the Capitulations according rights of interference to other Powers. Its sole working head, however, has from the first been the British Minister Plenipotentiary and Consul-General, otherwise known as the British Representative or British Agent, exercising what has been aptly termed a Single Control.

Writing with special reference to police organisation, but in terms applicable to the whole administrative machinery in Egypt, Lord Cromer in 1895 thus clearly indicated the genesis of his autocratic office, and its development up to that time, besides giving a clue to the

**Theory and  
Practice.**

modifications then in process of adoption as the result of eleven years' experience :—

“The original theory on which it was attempted to work the system of police that existed heretofore consisted in the organisation under English officers of an efficient body of armed men to be placed at the disposal of the Mudirs for the preservation of public security. In practice, however, it was impossible for Englishmen not to insist upon seeing that the instrument they had created was not misused. They had little or no control over the Mudirs. Consequently, there was an increasing tendency to push that functionary on one side, and work the police directly from head-quarters. The provincial police gradually assumed a semi-independent position towards the Mudir, which impaired the prestige of the latter, and divided the responsibility for the preservation of public security. In a word, the dualism—to use Nubar Pasha's favourite term—which is a necessary consequence of the British occupation, instead of being restricted, as in other administrations, to a few high English officials and native Ministers, displayed itself at the other end of the administrative hierarchy between native local officials, relying on the support of their English chiefs at head-quarters, and other local chiefs who should naturally have been their immediate superiors. It is incontestable that, under this system, much good work has been done and a great improvement effected in the public security of the country. The parts of the machine were, however, displaced from their normal position, with the result that there was a maximum of friction for the amount of work done.

“Under these circumstances, I was prepared to cordially support Nubar Pasha in his endeavours to reorganise the Ministry of the Interior on a more satisfactory basis. During the summer the main features of the changes which he desired to introduce were put into a practicable and acceptable shape, and shortly after my return to Egypt in October, 1894, the sanction of the Egyptian Government and of His Highness the Khedive was given to an arrangement which, while obviating the inconveniences pointed out above, secured in a form palatable to the Egyptian Ministry that moral control and supervision over the internal administration of this country which Her Majesty's Government are bound to exert so long as the British occupation continues.”—(Parliamentary Paper, ‘Egypt, No. 1, 1895,’ pp. 11, 12.)

In those sentences we have a rough outline of the entire policy of “Dualism,” which Lord Cromer occupied about twelve years in establishing, and has been strengthening and, in his opinion, perfecting during about another twelve years, with a view to the complete exercise of “that moral control and supervision over the internal administration of the country” which, he considers, His Majesty's Government “are bound to exert so long as the British occupation continues.”



Egypt has prospered notably in many ways under this arrangement. But that the arrangement has been disastrous in others must be evident to any one who impartially reviews the stages by which the "administrative hierarchy" has been built up.

It has been all the more disastrous, perhaps, because, notwithstanding the rare intelligence that has marked his two dozen years of "moral control and supervision," Lord Cromer himself seems to have been and still to be unconscious of the essential fault in his policy.

"The main principle upon which the work of reform in Egypt has been based from the beginning," he wrote in his Annual Report for 1895, "may be summed up in a single phrase:

'European head and Egyptian hands.' Our task **"European Head and Egyptian Hands."** here is not to rule the Egyptians, but as far as

possible to teach the Egyptians to rule themselves" ('Egypt, No. 1, 1896,' p. 16). These sentences disclose, with striking clearness, the remarkable and reckless confusion of thought by which many administrators besides Lord Cromer, and their apologists, presumably deceive themselves, and consequently deceive a great many outsiders, as to the methods of government they follow or favour.

Government may be hierarchic, monarchic, oligarchic, aristocratic, bureaucratic, democratic, or what not. But in any form of government not hopelessly diseased, and whatever diversities of nationality or class may separate its head and hands, there must be full sympathy between head and hands, and they must be integral parts of one body politic. Nor can Egyptians or any other subject people ever be taught to rule themselves unless they are allowed and encouraged to acquire, and gradually to put in practice, the skill and knowledge deemed necessary by their teachers to successful self-rule. What has Lord Cromer done to train up a body politic in Egypt? How far has he been teaching the Egyptians to rule themselves? Moreover, it may be asked, if "our task is not to rule the Egyptians," why have we been persistently, and with steadily increasing authority, if with lessening friction, ruling them throughout nearly a quarter of a century?

No criticism of the policy of the British Government, or that of its Agent in Egypt, however, would be just unless it clearly recognised the peculiar conditions under which it was entered upon, and the grave complications with which it had to deal.

## II. "THE RULER OF THE STATE."

Whatever objections may be reasonably made to Lord Cromer's Egyptian policy in recent years—the years in which, since 1892, he has been Lord Cromer, holding the reins of office doubtless with a freer hand than previously—there can be no question either as to the excellent intentions or as to the courage with which he undertook a task presenting more and greater difficulties than even he could have foreseen. He was also exceptionally fitted for the work. His first experience of the country was in 1876, when, as Captain Baring, he was appointed a Commissioner of the Caisse de la Dette then initiated, and he was afterwards one of the three commissioners employed on the financial inquiries that exposed the utter insolvency of the Khedive Ismail and the incompetence of the existing administrative machinery to do anything but aggravate the ruin. The result was Ismail's deposition and the establishment of the International Commission of Liquidation, preliminary to many important financial reforms. After three years' absence in India, Major Baring was sent back to Cairo to take up the more comprehensive duties of Minister Plenipotentiary and Consul-General of Great Britain, and in that capacity to promote the reforms agreed upon between Lord Dufferin and Sherif Pasha, the Prime Minister of Tewfik Pasha, the new Khedive.

**Lord Cromer's  
Antecedents.**

After Tewfik's death on 7th January, 1892, Lord Cromer wrote a sympathetic obituary, all the more instructive in that it shows a fellow-feeling, though from a different standpoint, with the late Khedive on account of the "position of very great difficulty" in which each was placed.

**The Subduing of  
Khedive Tewfik.**

"I was not in Egypt at the time of the Arabi rebellion, but I have frequently heard the conduct of the late Khedive during this most trying period spoken of by competent authorities in highly eulogistic terms. Subsequent to the British occupation the difficulties of the Khedive's position, though of a different order, were still very great. His Highness was, above all things, a moderate reformer. He was too well acquainted with the condition of his country not to be aware that the process of reform must of necessity be gradual. Whilst earnestly desirous to advance his countrymen to positions of trust and responsibility, he fully recognised that, for the time being, it was essential to employ a limited staff of well-selected Europeans.



The services rendered to the country by the Europeans in the employment of the Egyptian Government are now very generally recognised, but there was a time when their presence was viewed with a far greater amount of distrust and dislike than any which now exists. During this period it required no small amount of tact and judgment to carry out a policy of reform—in a great degree through European agency—without offending the feelings of the natives of the country. This tact and judgment the late Khedive displayed in an eminent degree. Whilst affording that loyal support to his European advisers without which their efforts to ameliorate the condition of the country would have been comparatively barren of result, His Highness was never forgetful of the fact that European institutions and administrative systems must necessarily be modified both in form and substance to meet the requirements of an Oriental population. The late Khedive was also well aware that financial extravagance and arbitrary government were the dangers which were most of all to be avoided. Laying to heart the lessons of the past, His Highness, both in his public and in his private life, which was in all other respects exemplary, was the first to discourage wastefulness and to support the supremacy of the law.....More especially during the last year or two the Khedive had, to the great benefit of his country, taken a far larger personal share than heretofore in administrative affairs. The confidence which he inspired, both amongst the European and native officials with whom he was brought in contact and with the population generally, was steadily increasing.....Throughout his career the attitude adopted by His Highness, both to Her Majesty's Government and to the Englishmen employed in the Egyptian service, was of a most friendly nature. He was fully aware that the sole aim of English policy in Egypt was to secure the welfare and prosperity of the Egyptian people, and he regulated his conduct accordingly.....The long and intimate connections which it was my privilege to entertain with His Highness justify me in speaking with confidence on this subject."—('Egypt, No. 3, 1892,' pp. 1, 2.)

There is no injustice, either to Lord Cromer or to the memory of the Khedive Tewfik, in pointing out that the good fellowship arrived at between the two, and the commendation of the former, were due to the latter's subservience to him. Readers of Lord Milner's 'England in Egypt' and other works devoted to praise and exposition of Lord Cromer's policy need not be reminded how Tewfik, siding at first with his Prime Minister Sherif in the quarrel with the British Government in 1884 over the evacuation of the Sudan, and, worsted in the struggle to the extent of having to dispense with Sherif's services, was less troublesome while Nubar was his Prime Minister; how, having to part with Nubar in turn at the Consul-General's bidding in 1888, he was

more amiable while Riaz Pasha was his nominal adviser-in-chief ; and how, finally, he became thoroughly docile before he had to substitute the complacent Mustapha Pasha Fehmi for the more restive Riaz Pasha in 1891. Here is Lord Milner's apology for the Khedive :—

“ Superficially, Tewfik was far less modern, less European, less civilised than his father.....But at heart, Tewfik was much more like a constitutional ruler of the Western type than an Oriental despot, while Ismail was a true Oriental despot with a Parisian veneer. Thus Tewfik was able to fall in with the new order of things, without offending the conservative instincts, or even the bigotry, of his subjects. He was, in fact, during the later years of his life, an invaluable link between the Europeans and the natives—a heaven-born mediator in that stage through which Egypt was passing. No doubt his rôle was not altogether consistent with absolute sincerity. He had a habit of agreeing with the man who was speaking to him, though he might just before have agreed with a different speaker in a somewhat different sense. He had a certain tendency to run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. But immense allowance must surely be made for the almost unexampled difficulty of his position. Had he been rigidly sincere, he could hardly have been, to the extent that he was, the man of the situation. And, if his policy seemed occasionally to be rather tortuous, it nevertheless tended to gain directness and unity as time went on, and as he acquired more confidence in himself and his surroundings. For several years it was difficult for him to feel sure how he stood with the English. Unable to feel confidence in the certainty of our support, he hesitated to throw in his lot with us. But, as he came to have faith in our steadfastness, he in turn became more steadfast.”—(‘ England in Egypt,’ fourth edition, 1907, pp. 134, 135.)

With reference to the present Khedive, Abbas Pasha Hilmi, Lord Cromer added to the remarks that have been cited above :—

“ There is every reason to hope and believe that the reforms which were inaugurated under the rule of His Highness's father will be steadily and gradually developed under the new régime. The deep interest which His Highness is disposed to take in all questions affecting the welfare of his country is warmly to be welcomed. *The legitimate personal influence and authority of the Ruler of the State is one of the most important elements in the government of all Oriental countries.\** It will be an agreeable portion of the duty, not only of myself as Representative of Her Majesty's Government, but also, I am convinced, of those Englishmen who are in His Highness's service, to strengthen and support that influence and authority to the best of our ability.”

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\* This sentence was not put in italics by Lord Cromer.



In this expectation the British Representative found himself, for a time at any rate, disappointed. The new Khedive, in his eighteenth year when he succeeded to the post, and educated in Geneva and Vienna, where his surroundings inclined him to be in sympathy with the "Young Egypt" party which had been growing up in consequence of what its promoters regarded as the pusillanimity of Tewfik, was in no mood to submit meekly to the British supremacy that Lord Cromer had been developing. His impetuosity, and the British Representative's startled resentment of it, led at once to friction, which was most manifest in 1893 and 1894, and had scarcely ceased in 1898. Sir Auckland Colvin, a typical Anglo-Egyptian and Anglo-Indian official, thus outlines the situation :—

**The Subduing of the Present Khedive.**

"Hostility to the foreign element in the Administration, and sullen opposition to its men and measures, showed themselves everywhere after the coming of Khedive Abbas. Public servants of all grades reflected the heat emanating from the Palace; the pashas sunned themselves in its rays; the servile soul of the effendi succumbed to it; and the fellah, who remembered well its scorching power, took refuge from it with Allah. The country was divided into Anglophobes and Anglophiles, if that can be called a division where the preponderance is overwhelmingly on one side. So keen was the feeling of unrest that the British garrison was reinforced. It was a good occasion for the malcontent foreign element in Egypt, and we may be sure that the most was made of it. The English classes in the Government schools were gradually deserted, and the scholars crowded the benches of the French instructors."—('The Making of Modern Egypt,' 1906, p. 249.)

The first serious trouble arose over the appointment of a successor to the Prime Minister, Mustapha Pasha Fehmi, who, in the latter part of 1892, fell ill and was thought to be dying. The Khedive selected for the office Fakri Pasha, whose opposition to Lord Cromer's judicial reforms had led to his enforced resignation of the Ministership of Justice, and the answer to this defiance of British control was a blunt intimation from Lord Rosebery, then Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, that "in all important matters, such as the formation of his Ministries, he must act with the knowledge and approval of the British authorities." Lord Rosebery's general statement of British policy, as it had shaped itself after ten years of British occupation, was made in a notable dispatch dated 16th February, 1893 :—

**Lord Rosebery's View.**

"Should further difficulties arise, it might be urged that the conditions



of the British occupation will have changed, and it may be asked whether altered circumstances do not require a corresponding modification of policy; whether the occupation should be maintained in opposition, as it might seem. to the sentiment of an important section of the inhabitants, and whether it would not be better that it should cease.

“To this view, however, certain elementary considerations oppose themselves. Firstly, it is necessary to consider the important interests, and indeed the safety, of the large European community in Egypt. Secondly, it is by no means clear that the real feeling, even of the native population in the country, is otherwise than friendly and grateful, although it may be difficult to elicit any public or decisive expression of it. It would not be right or proper that the policy of this country, based on considerations of permanent importance, should be modified in deference to hasty personal impulse or to ephemeral agitation among certain classes. Thirdly, it seems impossible lightly, and on the first appearance of difficulties, to retire from the task which was publicly undertaken in the general interest of Europe and civilisation, and to abandon the results of ten years of successful effort in that direction. And fourthly, the withdrawal of the British troops under such circumstances would too probably result in a speedy return to the former corrupt and defective systems of administration, and be followed by a relapse into confusion which would necessitate a fresh intervention under still more difficult circumstances, though it is not now necessary to discuss the particular form which that intervention might assume.

“All these considerations point to the conclusion that for the present there is but one course to pursue; that we must maintain the fabric of administration which has been constructed under our guidance, and must continue the process of construction without impatience, but without interruption, of an administrative and judicial system, which shall afford a reliable guarantee for the future welfare of Egypt.”

Accordingly, the Khedive was constrained to agree to the appointment of Riaz Pasha as Prime Minister, and when Riaz sided with the Khedive in a dispute with General Kitchener, at that time the Sirdar, or Commander-in-Chief of the Egyptian army, another Prime Minister, and one less acceptable to the Khedive, had to be provided by the reinstatement of Nubar. A compromise, and also a climax, was reached when, Nubar having given offence at the Palace, and Mustapha Fehmi having recovered his health, the latter was restored to the Premiership in 1895.

By this arrangement, lasting to the present day, Lord Cromer's control over the Egyptian Ministry was firmly established. “The legitimate personal influence and authority of the Ruler of the



State," he had written after the death of the Khedive Tewfik, "is one of the most important elements in the government of all Oriental countries." Having, in the course of the first nine years of his British Consul-Generalship, gradually acquired what was in the nature of a senior partnership with Tewfik Pasha in the Oriental functions of a Ruler of the State in Egypt, he was troubled during more than three other years by Abbas Pasha Helmi's efforts to recover for the Khedivate the major part, if not the whole, of those functions. By the discomfiture of Abbas in 1895, he has been enabled to occupy a position which it may not be unfair to liken to that of a Mayor of the Palace in mediæval France.

**Lord Cromer as  
Ruler of the State.**

The British Minister Plenipotentiary, in his capacity of Consul-General, Representative or Agent, has, of course, no official rank or place of any sort in the Egyptian Administration. Of this Administration the Khedive is the nominal head. He it is who signs all decrees and other documents of sufficient importance to require more than the formal sanction of one of his subordinates; who ostensibly makes or cancels the appointments of these subordinates, from the Prime Minister, and even the Sirdar, downwards; and who in every way possible now ceremonially represents the Sultan of Turkey as Viceroy of the tributary Egyptian province of the Ottoman Empire, as well as the viceregal dynasty founded by his great - great - grandfather Mohammed Ali in 1811, and confirmed, with further privileges, to his grandfather Ismail by Imperial firman in 1867. As a matter of fact, however, except that he and others of his family draw considerable pensions and hold large estates, with the civil rights attaching to them, the Khedive, while practically independent of the Sultan, is in a position of complete political dependence on the British Agent.

The real Ruler of the State is not Abbas Pasha Hilmi, but, according to arrangements fitfully developed throughout a dozen years and in full operation through another dozen, Lord Cromer.

### III. "THE ADMINISTRATIVE HIERARCHY."

It was absolutely necessary, of course, that the British Government, having taken on itself the task of rescuing Egypt from the financial ruin and the political corruption incident to Ismail Pasha's Oriental infirmities, whether inherited or acquired, should make vigorous efforts to replace

**Benevolent Despotism  
in Operation.**



the chaos that it found by orderly and beneficial government. To that end, except in so far as they were too visionary to be practicable, the proposals sketched out in detail by Lord Dufferin, and assigned to Lord Cromer for enforcement, were in themselves legitimate and highly commendable. The "benevolent despotism" involved in their enforcement would doubtless have been more than excusable had it been of a sort to prepare the way for the promised restoration of Egypt to the Egyptians within five years or so, under conditions enabling them, if they could, to work out their own salvation without opportunity for the revival of old abuses and renewal of the disasters that, besides being especially harmful to the Egyptians themselves, had caused Egypt to be a centre of disturbance and a source of danger in the political world.

Unfortunately, the "benevolent despotism" has been extended already from five years to nearly five-and-twenty, and each year, notwithstanding all the improvements that have been effected, leaves the country more than ever dependent on Lord Cromer and his subordinates for the management of its affairs, and its people less competent or ready than before to take that management into their own hands. For this deplorable state of things the "administrative hierarchy" built up by the British Minister Plenipotentiary must, at any rate in part, be held responsible.

Assuming that the British Government was right in taking under its protection the foreign bond-holders and other creditors of Egypt, as well as in particularly safeguarding its controlling share in the Suez Canal and our country's pecuniary and commercial interests—assuming also that it has since been right in heavily taxing both the rich and the poor for payment of interest on the monstrous loans recklessly incurred by Ismail Pasha, without the concurrence of his subjects, and greatly to their prejudice—small complaint can be made against the autocratic financial policy pursued throughout by Lord Cromer. That policy has been hampered to some extent, indeed, by the independence of the Caisse de la Dette, of which, in the time of Ismail, Lord Cromer was one of the original Commissioners, and which, although already much restrained in its operations, can only be abolished by the redemption or conversion of the whole of the Public Debt—an operation which has been much assisted by Lord Cromer's skill as a financier, but which will not be completed before 1912, if then. The most hot-headed Egyptian Nationalists will probably admit that, even if they could procure a repudiation of the Public Debt, it

would be well to leave the management of their country's finances in English hands for some time to come, and that, in any case, the people would profit by such British control over their budget, and over the national income and outlay provided for therein, as should save them from the blundering or worse to which their own countrymen, in the present stage of public morality, might be liable.

For like reasons all intelligent and patriotic Egyptians welcome the presence among them of those foreigners, including many who are not British subjects, who have really assisted their country by giving effect to reforming projects devised for their benefit, but of a sort

**"Moral Control  
and Supervision."**

that natives could not be expected to initiate or even to carry out aright without such "moral control and supervision" as Lord Cromer considers it the duty of the British Government, and especially of himself as its Agent, to exert. So it may be, especially as regards judicial offices and legal procedure, in harmony with the better methods of European law courts, and also as regards the scientific and mechanical arrangements by which stupendous improvements in irrigation, railway construction, and much else, have been effected in recent years, and even as regards many other improvements in sanitation and the like, for the introduction or proper spread of which the Egyptians are still waiting. In every department of the Government service, in fact, there is not only room, but there may be real need, for a sprinkling of capable European officials to assist and, within reasonable limits, direct their native colleagues.

This, so far as intentions go, is justification for the appointment of British Advisers to the several Ministers of Finance, Justice, the Interior, Public Works, and Instruction, and for the employment of Englishmen as Under Secretaries in other departments besides those just mentioned. Foreigners had been plentiful in the Egyptian Civil Service before Lord Cromer's arrival, and many of these had to be cleared away as unscrupulous promoters of the extravagance indulged in by Ismail. Lord Cromer's evident desire at starting was to leaven the whole service with men skilful and honest enough to put healthy life, from a native point of view, into the entire machinery of government. "We want in Egypt," he wrote as late as 1903, "to create gradually a body of public servants who will be able to take an intelligent and really useful part in the administration of their country, not a race of automatons bound hand and foot by a rigid set of bureaucratic formulæ." ('Egypt, No. 1, 1904,' p. 35.) Yet that is exactly what Lord



Cromer has failed to create, his failure being manifestly due to some other cause than lack of zeal in the matter or ignorance as to its importance. In 1891 he wrote:—

“It behoves the Egyptian Government to commence reform in this direction. Unless this be done, whatever political future may be in store for Egypt, the administrative necessities of the country will inevitably tend to the increased employment of European agency.

“From whatever point of view the question be regarded, this would, I think, be an evil. No one recognises more fully than myself the excellent work done by European officials in Egypt. No one sees more clearly that, for the time being, their employment is essential to the welfare of the population. But even the remarkable moral and material progress which their presence in the country has ensured, will, in many respects, have been dearly bought, unless the ultimate tendency of any reforms which may have been or may be executed is to decrease rather than increase the necessity of employing European agents, and unless a capable body of natives is trained who may, not abruptly indeed, but gradually and tentatively, work for the administrative machinery initiated under European guidance. This point of view should, I think, be constantly in the mind of the Egyptian Government, and of the superior officials, whether European or native, in their employment.”

Lord Cromer's very pertinent suggestion—which, strangely enough, he does not seem to have thought of himself paying heed to—was followed by other timely remarks, based on the alleged, and doubtless actual, superiority of the Government's judicial staff over its other native employés:—

“There can be no doubt that the administrative career fails to attract the best and most capable of the young Egyptians. It is a notorious fact, which will readily be admitted by any impartial and intelligent Egyptian, that the present class of judges in the provinces exhibit a higher standard of efficiency than the administrative officials. Why better? Why is this? The salaries of the latter are certainly not inferior to those of the former. As regards position and the importance of their work, the advantage is all on the side of the administrative officials. Yet the better-educated and most intelligent of the new generation flock to the judicial in preference to the administrative service. The explanation is that, in the one case, they have before them a definite career and a good prospect of promotion, and, in the other, they have neither of these advantages. There is, in fact, no properly organised hierarchy for the provincial administration, in which a man may feel some security that, in proportion to his merits, he will be advanced from place to place until the highest positions come within his grasp.....The remedy for the state of things I have attempted to describe above is more or less indicated by the examination of its causes. Sufficient inducements must be

offered to ensure the best and most capable of the young Egyptians entering the service of the provincial administration. Once there, they must be carefully trained and inspected by those who are responsible for the result of their work. Every care must be taken that promotions are due to merit, or even to seniority, but at all events not to favouritism. The higher places must be filled from the ranks, and not by appointment of influential outsiders."—('Egypt, No. 3, 1892,' pp. 36, 37.)

This sound advice, and more to the same effect, appears not to have been adequately acted upon. At any rate, Lord Cromer is still dissatisfied with the Egyptian civil service, and the more completely it comes under his or **The Egyptian Civil Service.** his English colleagues' control, the more unsatisfactory, itself also the more dissatisfied, it becomes, and the more necessary it is considered that its higher places should be filled, not from the ranks, but by the appointment of outsiders, influential or otherwise.

Our latest official information as to the exact composition of this service is for the year 1898, when, apart from the military and police establishments, it comprised a total of 10,600 Egyptians and 1,270 Europeans—455 of the latter being British, and the rest chiefly French and Italians. Of the Egyptians, however, all but 258 were paid at a lower rate than £E360 per annum, the great majority, doubtless, having stipends very far below the maximum. Of the British, 346 were in the same category, being for the most part engine-drivers, lighthouse keepers, and so forth, while 92 drew salaries of between £E360 and £E840 apiece, and 47 were paid at yet higher rates. The Egyptians in the second grade numbered 213, and those in the highest 45. "The maximum salary received by any Egyptian official," Lord Cromer reported, "is £E2,700 a year. This is the salary of an Egyptian Minister. The maximum salary received by an European official is"—of course excluding Lord Cromer himself and the Sirdar, Sir Reginald Wingate—"£E2,000 a year." He adds:—"I may say that the rehabilitation of Egypt, in so far as it has been due to British influence, has been carried out by a body of officials who certainly do not exceed 100 in number, and might possibly, if the figures were rigidly examined, be stated somewhat lower."—('Egypt, No. 3, 1899,' pp. 47, 48.)

There is no reason for supposing that, as a rule, the British and other European officials in Egypt are overpaid for the functions assigned to them, nor would there be ground for saying that their numbers, until lately at any rate, were excessive, had they proved



themselves—or were they proving themselves at present, when their number is being largely augmented—skilful and successful educators of the native officials, in enabling them “to take an intelligent and really useful part in the administration of their country, not a race of automatons bound hand and foot by a rigid set of bureaucratic formulæ.”

What Lord Cromer precisely means by those words in his Annual Report for 1903 is not clear. But they are explicit enough in their implied

**“Automatons Bound  
Hand and Foot.”**

condemnation of the system of “European heads and Egyptian hands,” which he has long been, and still is, so zealously endeavouring to establish. The fault is not in the attempt to provide European advisers, in the true sense of the term, or European heads for the healthy guidance of Egyptian hands, with nerves and muscles working sympathetically and harmoniously, but in supposing that persons of a different race—or of the same race, though in a subordinate position—can take “an intelligent and useful part in the administration of their country,” or be other than uncongenial and irresponsive hirelings, if they are treated as “automatons bound hand and foot by a rigid set of bureaucratic rules.” That that is the treatment to which they are liable is shown by Lord Cromer’s appeal, in the same report, to the teaching section of his bureaucracy to adopt methods fitted to “develop the reasoning powers” of its pupils instead of grinding “a mere machine for storing the memory with a number of bald facts.” “Much also,” he says, “may be done by the continuous pressure of capable and sympathetic European officials. I ask every British official in this country to help in this work. I ask him more especially to beware lest the individualism which is his most precious national birthright be itself tainted by contact with a system which tends to enhance unduly the value of forms, and to depreciate unduly their substance.” What has Lord Cromer himself done—as supreme head of the “administrative hierarchy” he has built up, with the Khedive’s Ministers under his control, and that of the minor European heads he attaches to their several departments as “advisers,” “under-secretaries,” and the like—to encourage “individualism,” or any other “national birthright” of their own among the Egyptians, who are none the less abjectly in British employ because the Khedive, or the Exchequer ostensibly his, is their paymaster?

The grievous shortcomings and yet more grievous excrescences and concomitants of Lord Cromer’s “administrative hierarchy” are

recognized by all visitors to Egypt who care to look beneath the surface, and are more or less cynically admitted by many of his own deputy hierarchs when they venture to utter their thoughts aloud. They are condemned more scornfully by the native officials who, influenced by the salaries open to them, or other attractions, and in some cases by genuine desire to serve their country as best they can, accept the position of "automatons bound hand and foot." Most of all are they denounced by outside patriots, who see in the system a pernicious desire, even if it had no malign intention, to destroy the independence of the people over whom we assert our control. Perhaps no severer strictures upon it have been passed by any Englishman than those which appear in a work just published by Mr. Edward Dicey, whose personal knowledge of Egypt extends over nearly forty years, and who has been from the first a consistent advocate of British dominion there. He writes :—

"It is with great reluctance I say anything in depreciation of Lord Cromer's great merits as an administrator. But the interests of truth compel me to state that his remarkable individuality has biassed him almost unconsciously in favour of a system of autocratic rule administered by British officials appointed by himself and holding their offices subject, in fact, though not in name, to his approval.....The force of circumstances, far more than his own volition, has placed him in a position of exceptional authority; and his personal characteristics have led him to make the consolidation and extension of that authority the dominant principle of his policy. The extent to which this policy is now carried on, and has been carried on for years, can hardly be appreciated by any one not intimately acquainted with Egypt. It is no exaggeration to assert that under this policy the administration of Egypt is conducted by British officials, and that these officials are under the absolute control of the British Agency. From the highest posts in the public service to the lowest, every appointment is made under the supervision of Lord Cromer, and his disapproval is fatal. This is not all; I have no doubt his Lordship would, in good faith, deny the statement that no British official can express doubt as to the expediency of any measure emanating from the Agency, or criticise it unfavourably, without losing all chance of promotion and risking the tenure of his position. All old public servants, whether British or native, who have resided long in the country and who have thus acquired experience, are viewed with disfavour from the fact that they are competent to express opinions which may not be in accord with the ideas in favour at headquarters.....

"The country has been inundated with British officials, who, even when they are nominally subject to the authority of their native coadjutors



appointed by the Khedivial Government, are given to understand that their native colleagues are to carry out the instructions they receive from the British Agency. Thus the native officials, learning that they are mere dummies in the administration of their own country, have either retired from the public service or have contented themselves with drawing their salaries and acquiescing in whatever instructions they may receive from their British colleagues."—('The Egypt of the Future,' 1907, pp. 187, 188, 199, 200).

#### IV. THE KHEMIVE AND HIS SUBJECTS.

With the exception of the foregoing quotations from Mr. Edward Dicey, all the statements here made have thus far been based on official documents or semi-official publications. For information as to some results of Lord Cromer's policy on the Egyptian community, however, we must turn to other sources.

Mr. Dicey, whose opinion on this matter is all the more noteworthy because he is a persistent and outspoken champion of British supremacy, though not of all Lord Cromer's ways of asserting and establishing it, says in another part of his recent volume, with reference to the submissive predecessor of the present Khedive:—

"A misplaced sentimentalism on the part of the British public insisted upon Arabi and his associates being treated as patriots whose offences would be adequately met by exile in lieu of death. Tewfik Pasha's Temper. Pasha was thereby condemned, sorely against his will, to look to the prolongation of our occupation as essential to the continuance of his reign, if not to that of his life. I was told during his lifetime by one of his ministers that in the early days of our occupation some remark was made in the course of conversation about a recent review of the British garrison at which His Highness had been present. Thereupon the Viceroy suddenly turned to his interlocutor, saying, 'Do you suppose I like all this? I tell you I never see an English sentinel in my streets without longing to jump out of my carriage and strangle him with my own hands.' If this was the sentiment of so peaceable and kindly a man as Tewfik Pasha, it is easy to understand what was—and probably still is—the sentiment of the other descendants of Mohammed Ali, princes of far stronger character and higher pride of race and creed.....Nor can I for one as an Englishman consider their lack of appreciation of British rule as a conclusive sign of moral depravity."—('The Egypt of the Future,' p. 174.)

Lord Cromer's violent prejudice against the present Khedive, whom he has not been able to forgive for his youthful efforts at self-assertion, is notorious; but it is more frankly indicated in the utterances of his lordship's out-and-out admirers than in any public words of his own. The following is a sample of the unjust and unseemly abuse that is common:—

**The Present  
Khedive's Temper.**

"The character of Abbas Pasha is that almost of a monomaniac. Unlike his brother Mohammed Ali Pasha, the heir presumptive,\* he is not in sympathy with Europeans, whom he habitually avoids. Neither is he an Oriental, as is demonstrated by the fact of his marriage with a slave who formerly belonged to his mother. He does not maintain intimate relations with his Ministers, who are figure-heads of a virtual Anglo-Egyptian condominium; nor does he cultivate relations with the Ulema.....He has no sovereign power, and he resents it. He is the vassal of Europe. Therefore he chafes under the restraints imposed upon him, and lends himself too readily to the machinations of the so-called Nationalist or Young Egypt party, whose influence over him is of the worst possible kind, morally and politically. His one hobby is building—not public works, like Ismail, whom he resembles only in his voluptuous tastes, but stables for his horses, houses for his chickens, &c. He is, however, said to be amenable to the hand that 'gives him money to play with.'"—(A. Silva White, 'The Expansion of Egypt, 1899,' p. 160.)†

A far more trustworthy account of the Khedive and his habits—although it overstates the importance and variety of the viceregal functions allowed to him—is given by a vivacious French writer, who has had many opportunities of seeing him and other members of his family in the past two years. According to M. A. B. de Guerville:—

"The popular imagination—which would like to represent the Khedive in a luxurious palace, passing his days lolling on a sofa in the midst of a mass of cushions, eating sweetmeats or smoking a hubble-bubble, inhaling the perfume of flowers—the popular imagination, I say, would receive a very severe shock in learning that the Khedive is in fact the busiest man in Egypt. It would be difficult for any man to lead a fuller, more active and

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\* These words were written before the birth of the Khedive's son.

† The same writer says on his next page: "Egyptians complain that our power is not sufficiently exercised to encourage, to protect, and to guarantee the adherence and loyal support of the native officials, who, finding themselves between Lord Cromer's hammer and the Khedive's anvil, have to be both expert and tactful in order to escape being crushed." If this is correct, surely the crushing power is the British Agent's, not the Khedive's.



more energetic life. Official duties, laws to study, decrees to sign, Ministerial Councils to preside over, audiences, receptions, reviews, all the occupations, in fact, of a sovereign, would be considered by most to be work enough. Nevertheless, besides these, His Highness finds time for breeding live stock and for farming on a large scale, for improving his properties, for constructing new quarters in both town and village, for bringing under cultivation huge tracts of land till now arid and abandoned, for travelling over his vast estates by rail, yacht, dahabeah, carriage and motor, on horseback or camelback, and, above all, for constructing, with his own money, a line of railway destined to unite Tripoli with Egypt.”—(‘New Egypt,’ 1906, p. 110.)

Many of Abbas Hilmi’s cultured and serviceable pastimes and pursuits as a wealthy landowner, enjoying some of the privileges—but subject to more than the ordinary restraints—of a  
**The Khedive’s** “limited monarch”—a liberal-minded Moslem, a  
**Brother.** monogamist, and an abstainer from strong drink and tobacco are here described, and much is also told about his kinsfolk. His brother, Mohammed Ali Pasha, for instance, whom Mr. Silva White regards more favourably, is credited by M. de Guerville with the following outspoken remarks:—

“We are living in sad times. Can you imagine a people, numbering twelve million souls, allowing themselves to be kept in leading-strings by a handful of strangers, or who in business allow Greeks and Jews to amass all the wealth of the country? It is shameful and it is sad.....The worst feature of the situation is that the English have treated us Egyptians with such contempt that the people have now lost all respect for the intelligent and leading classes of the country. Formerly the *tarbouche* (the national head-dress) was held in respect; to-day it is the foreign hat which is worshipped. The police, who are so brutal to the weaker classes, but who will lick the boots of the stronger, are paralysed at the sight of a hat, whilst they will not even salute a Prince or Minister whose head is covered with a *tarbouche*..... When I was in England I met many charming people, who treated me with perfect courtesy. It made me ask myself continually, Can these people, with such charming manners and so well-bred, be the same brutes we have in Egypt? Why are they so perfect at home and so ill-mannered with us? And, take my word for it, they are making a great mistake. It is because of their bad manners that they are not liked. A little more consideration and politeness towards us Egyptians would gain for them many friendships and much devotion: but what we cannot stand is their boorishness, their lack of tact, and their coarseness.”—(*Ibid.*, pp. 133, 134.)

Whether used by the Khedive’s brother or not, language of that sort appears to be common, if not universal, among nearly all social

grades of Egyptians. It is looked upon as sedition by Lord Cromer and his panegyrists ; but other Englishmen find abundant excuse, if not full justification, for it.

There was notable illustration of the callousness and contempt with which average Englishmen treat the people of Egypt, especially when they are of humble rank, in the deplorable occurrence at Denshawai in June, 1906. Here the officers who provoked the disturbance evidently took it as a matter of course that they were free to amuse themselves by shooting pigeons that were the private property, and contributory to the means of living, of the villagers intruded upon ; and the very natural resentment shown by those villagers was regarded as an offence so heinous that four of them were promptly hanged, and seventeen others punished with either penal servitude or flogging, or with both ; the whole village being afterwards and permanently penalised by dismissal of its omdeh, or headman, and by its being put under the control of a gang of alien police. The harshness and tyranny indulged in on this occasion were almost unparalleled in enormity ; but there was no novelty in their motives or methods, and it is not surprising that they provoked widespread sympathy and alarm among natives of all classes.

**Alleged Native  
Unrest.**

Expressions of their feelings, however, as well as the original objections of the Denshawai villagers, were represented by Lord Cromer and his supporters as evidence of general unrest, likely, unless it was dealt with very cautiously, to result in a general rising, aggravated by religious animosities, perhaps involving grave international complications and a revival of Turkish claims to mastery of Egypt. This rash talk was loudest and most plentiful just at the time when efforts were being made, in the Parliamentary session of last year, to obtain adequate discussion of the Denshawai affair in the House of Commons, and, whether so intended or not, it had the effect of to some extent stifling discussion when it might have been most useful. Since then the scare has in large measure subsided. But it continues to be made use of as a pretext for discouraging all criticism in England of Lord Cromer's policy, and in prejudicing in Egypt itself all movements in favour of reform. It is important, therefore, that public opinion should be set right in the matter.

In his Annual Report for 1905, the latest that has been issued, Lord Cromer averred :—"The year opened under auspices of a peculiarly favourable nature for the cause of Egyptian progress and



reform. I think it may be said that this anticipation has been realised. During the past year the whole machine of government worked very smoothly.....There is every reason to believe that this steady and uniform rate of progress will be maintained in future years" ('Egypt, No. 1, 1906,' p. 97). That belief would doubtless have continued had not a small trouble arisen on the Arabian frontier of Egypt, quickly to be suppressed by firm dealing with the Porte, and had not the Denshawai incident occurred. Whatever unrest appeared on the surface after the Tarbah and Denshawai affairs must have been latent and working under the "steady and uniform" progress of reforms rejoiced over by Lord Cromer, and must be attributable to his administration, not to any outside causes. The fault was with his "administrative hierarchy," and the "moral control and supervision" exercised by it, not with the Egyptian people or with their religious teachers.

Every one acquainted with the inner life of the Egyptians is aware of their remarkable freedom from the bigotry usually assigned to professors of the Moslem faith, and, however strongly and reasonably they may object to the unworthy concomitants of British rule, of their marked preference of that rule, with all its defects, to the Turkish rule from which they have been delivered. All they ask is that British rule shall be purged of the abuses that so grievously lessen its value to them.



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LONDON

PRINTED BY J. E. FRANCIS & Co.,  
BREAM'S BUILDINGS, CHANCERY LANE, E.C.